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U.S., Russians Talk Again on Troops in Cuba

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Against a background of growing U.S. concern over Cuba's rising military strength, Soviet-American discussions resume today on Soviet troops stationed in Cuba.

Secretary of State Cyrus R. Vance and Soviet Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin scheduled a second round of discussions on their governments' conflicting views. They disagree whether the Soviet troops constitute a combat unit or just a training mission.

President Carter has called them a combat brigade whose presence is not acceptable. The Soviet newspaper Pravda said they were running a military training center under a defense program that is "an inalienable right of two sovereign states."

But the Pravda line that training Cubans to use Soviet military equipment should be acceptable came under attack in a broadening of the controversy. The attack was led by Sen. Henry M. Jackson, D-Wash. A leading opponent of the new strategic arms limitations treaty, SALT II, Jackson is often publicly suspicious of Soviet activities.

He insisted yesterday that just getting rid of Soviet combat troops was not enough. He wanted also to reverse the buildup of Cuban military strength with Soviet armaments that has been going on since the Cuban army began operating in Africa almost four years ago in support of Kremlin policies.

Jackson's comments came as the administration restudied its evidence of a combat brigade following the Pravda denial. The new study came between Vance's first discussion of the subject with Dobrynin on Monday and today's meeting.

Dobrynin had consulted Moscow during the interim. U.S. officials, who kept tight secrecy around the talks, expected further consultations to be needed and the talks to continue for a while. They continued to talk of a negotiated solution to the problem.

Vance discussed the situation yesterday morning with Defense Secretary Harold Brown, Director of Central Intelligence Stansfield Turner and National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski. Brzezinski later briefed Carter. Vance lunched with former secretar

Kissinger told reporters after lunch that Vance had his "full support." Accepting the administration's position on the nature of the 2,000 to 3,000 Soviet soldiers, he said that "the presence of the Soviet combat unit is unacceptable.

"How the presence is ended is the subject of negotiations, and I don't think I ought to go into tactics," Kissinger said.

Vance, Byrd Meet

Vance later went to the Senate to meet Majority Leader Robert C. Byrd and the chairman of the foreign relations committee, Frank Church. Byrd urged the Senate to "keep cool" and "avoid a panic atmosphere."

But Jackson was calling in both interviews and a Senate speech for stronger action than the administration has publicly considered. He said the United States must insist that limits be placed on the kind of military equipment that Moscow can provide to the Cuban armed forces.

Jackson said the Soviets have already armed Cuba with an attack submarine that could pose a "major threat to our oil supplies" and are building up a sophisticated weapons system on the island.

"In the last two years, we have begun to see the development of 'Fortress Cuba,' a major upgrading of the combat capabilities of the Cuban armed forces," Jackson said.

He recalled previous revelations that Soviet-made MiG-23 ground attack warplanes have been supplied to Cuba and noted that they are capable of carrying nuclear weapons. These must be removed from the island, Jackson contended.

"More ominous, during the past year the Soviets have supplied the Cubans with their first attack submarine capability," Jackson said. "They have introduced two boats: one is a training unit, the other is a combat unit. Cuba has no experience in submarine warfare."

The submarine is capable of laying mines off the U.S. coast, Jackson said, and "in numbers, they would constitute a major threat to our oil supplies.

"Under no circumstances should the Soviet Union be allowed to provide Cuba with additional submarines, or other naval forces with the reach to threaten our ports or our shipping," Jackson said.

Meanwhile it was disclosed that a Defense Intelligence Agency report given to a House subcommittee last April shows that Cuba has progressed from getting second-issue military equipment to getting sophisticated armaments.

Those armaments include new Turya-class hydrofoil patrol boats that can be armed with torpedoes and guns, plus new amphibious armored infantry vehicles and helicopter gunships. The intelligence report says that Cuba is the first nation outside of Russia itself to get the new Turya craft.

Citing the MiG-23 presence as evidence, retired U.S. Army Gen. John K. Singlaub said yesterday that the Soviet troops' task in Cuba was to protect nuclear missiles.

"I know there are nuclear missiles in Cuba. The U.S. Intelligence establishment knows there are nuclear missiles in Cuba. And President Carter knows there are nuclear missiles in Cuba," Singlaub said in an interview with the Norwich (Conn.) Bulletin.

Singlaub, who lost his command in South Korea in 1977 when he criticized Carter's plans to withdraw U.S. troops from South Korea, said he learned of the Soviet nuclear presence in Cuba from his former colleagues in the military.

Today, however, Singlaub said he had no factual knowledge that there are nuclear missiles in Cuba or that Soviet troops are there to guard them.

But Sen. Richard Stone, D-Fla., who first raised the issue of the Soviet presence in Cuba in July, told the Bulletin that when he asked several senior Carter administration officials to confirm Singlaub's story, he was told there was "absolutely no truth to it."